

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of HYBRID MEETING of the **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE** held in the Town and County Hall, Forfar on Tuesday 16 January 2024 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors MARK McDONALD, KENNY BRAES, BRIAN BOYD, SERENA COWDY, LYNNE DEVINE, BILL DUFF, BRENDA DURNO, DAVID FAIRWEATHER, CRAIG FOTHERINGHAM, IAN McLAREN, LLOYD MELVILLE, LOUISE NICOL, RONNIE PROCTOR MBE, JILL SCOTT, MARTIN SHEPHERD AND IAIN GALL.

Councillor McDONALD, Convener, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors David Cheape and Tommy Stewart, with Councillors Brian Boyd and Iain Gall substituting, respectively.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND STATEMENTS OF TRANSPARENCY

The Committee agreed to note that there were no declarations of interest or statements of transparency made.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 21 November 2023 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Convener.

4. DRAFT ANGUS FORESTRY & WOODLAND STRATEGY 2024 – 2034

There was submitted Report No 10/24 by the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth seeking approval of the draft Angus Forestry & Woodland Strategy 2024-2034, which contained the Council's proposed policies in relation to forestry and woodland. The Report also sought approval for a six-week period of public consultation on the Strategy and its associated Strategic Environmental Assessment between January and February 2024.

The Service Leader, Planning & Sustainable Growth introduced the Report and advised that the new draft Forestry & Woodland Strategy had been prepared in-house with guidance from a steering group comprising Council Officers, and representatives from Scottish Forestry and NatureScot. Angus had been assessed using GIS datasets and mapped according to sensitivities which may affect suitability for forestry and woodland expansion. Areas were categorised as either Preferred, Potential or Sensitive and were set out in the Strategy and accompanying maps. It was noted that the guidance map attached as Appendix 2 to the Report also replaced the map within section 6 of the Strategy.

The Report indicated that the Strategy also aspired to create woodland habitat networks within Angus and there was substantial scope to increase productive forestry within Angus to help contribute towards the ambitious Scottish Government target of 18,000ha per year by 2024/2025. (The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2020-2021). The Strategy supported new forestry where it complied with the guidance contained within the UK Forestry Standard and within the Strategy which set out environmental standards within which forestry must comply.

The Service Leader, Planning & Sustainable Growth then answered questions from Councillors Devine and Duff.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to approve the proposed draft Angus Forestry & Woodland Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report and supporting Environmental Assessments as detailed in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 to the Report;

- (ii) to authorise public consultation of the draft Angus Forestry & Woodland Strategy and associated Strategic Environmental Assessments over a six-week period during January and February 2024;
- (iii) to authorise the Habitat Regulations Appraisal for consultation with NatureScot over a six-week period during January and February 2024; and
- (iv) to note that following public consultation and analysis and consideration of responses, a further report would be submitted to this Committee for formal approval of the Forestry and Woodland Strategy 2024-2034 and Environmental Assessments. This report would also detail the comments received and any changes made to both the Strategy and Environmental Assessments as a result of consultation responses.

5. ARBROATH HARBOUR – PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE – AUDITS

With reference to Article 8 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 November 2022, there was submitted Report No 11/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment which presented to members the updated version of the Marine Safety Management System for Arbroath Harbour along with the results of the 2023 Port Marine Safety Code Audit carried out by the council's Designated Person, the results of a Maritime & Coastguard Agency health check and the results of the Northern Lighthouse Board audit all which measured the Council's performance against the Port Marine Safety Code.

The Report indicated that on 13 October 2023, Monty Smedley from APBMer visited Arbroath Harbour and spent the day with the Harbour Master to carry out the Port Marine Safety Code Audit. This was a comprehensive audit which went through every aspect of the Code and measured Arbroath Harbour's performance against it. Mr Smedley also had a discussion with Councillor Cowdy, a representative from the Duty Holder (Communities Committee). The result of the Audit was contained in Appendix 2 to the report.

Councillor Fairweather welcomed the Report and spoke of his involvement on the Arbroath Harbour Joint Consultative Committee over the last 16 years. He advised that he was standing down as Chairman of the consultative committee due to his impending resignation from his role as elected member. He thanked the harbour master and staff for their commitment and the officers who had provided him with advice and support during his time as Chairman and wished them all the best for the future.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to approve the updated Marine Safety Management System which was in place for Arbroath Harbour and formed an integral part of the safe operation of Arbroath Harbour and the audit process;
- (ii) to note the results of the Port Marine Safety Code Audit, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency health check and the Northern Lighthouse Board audit including the observations, recommendations, and areas of good practice identified; and
- (iii) that all members of the Communities Committee undertaking a visit to Arbroath Harbour on a date suitable for all in Spring 2024 to ensure compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code.

6. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CAPITAL GRANT ALLOCATIONS FOR RENEWAL OF PLAYPARKS 2023 – 2026

With reference to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 22 November 2022, there was submitted Report No 12/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment which provided information on the capital grant allocation to Angus Council from the Scottish Government for Renewal of Play Parks and recommended projects for approval to use the grant allocation for the financial years 2023/24 to 2025/26.

The Report advised that as the total costs for the complete renewal of all playparks by far exceeded the funding available a review of the condition of all 96 play areas had been undertaken to establish a list of priority projects with the view of achieving improvements for as

many local communities as possible, but also based on the need for renewals of the current play provision.

At the same time, the assessment also reviewed aspects required through the new National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) which called for Scottish planning authorities to undertake a Play Sufficiency Assessment. This involved assessing the extent and quality of children's opportunities for play in their settlements. In preparation for this the play evaluation incorporated additional criteria such as access, inclusion, play on offer for various age groups etc.

It was noted that the outcome of the assessments had been rated from category A with the lowest scoring to category D achieving the highest marks. The playparks in categories A and B were then reviewed again to identify the units most requiring renewal and other works such as access improvements or Health and Safety enhancements.

Following a number of questions and having heard from the Director of Infrastructure and Environment in response, the Committee agreed: -

- (i) to approve the list of proposals, as detailed in section 4 of the Report, for use of Renewal of Play Park Capital Allocation of £1,116,000 for financial years 2023/24 to 2025/26; and
- (ii) to note the need for further investment in Angus playparks in following years.

7. B978 BALLUMBIE TO KELLAS, B978 WELLBANK TO LOVEHALL COTTAGE, U314 KELLAS TO MURROES PRIMARY SCHOOL AND B957 BRECHIN ROAD, KIRRIEMUIR – AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING SPEED LIMITS

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of the Development Management Review Committee of 13 June 2023, there was submitted Report No 13/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment informing members of the conditions set out by the Development Management Review Committee regarding the speed limit on the B978 between Ballumbie and Kellas and concerns raised over speeding on the B978 between Wellbank and Lovehall Cottages, on the U314 between Kellas and Murroes Primary School and on the B957 Brechin Road, Kirriemuir.

The Report presented proposals to reduce the speed limits and detailed the findings of the engineering investigations carried out as detailed in the Report.

The Director of Infrastructure and Environment introduced the Report and discussion took place during which a number of members welcomed the proposals.

The Committee agreed: -

- (i) to note the conditions set out by the Development Management Review Committee of 13 June 2023, and detailed in Report No.185/23;
- (ii) to note the concerns raised by local residents following consideration;
- (iii) to note the findings of the engineering investigations carried out to assess the concerns raised;
- (iv) to approve the implementation of the proposed amendments to the existing speed limits on the B978 between Ballumbie and Kellas and shown on the plan in Appendix 1 to the Report;
- (v) to approve the implementation of the proposed amendments to the existing speed limits on the B978 between Wellbank and Lovehall Cottage and shown on the plan in Appendix 2 to the Report;
- (vi) to approve the implementation of the proposed amendments to the existing speed limits on the U314 between Kellas and Murroes Primary School and shown on the plan in Appendix 3 to the Report; and

- (vii) to approve the implementation of the proposed amendments to the existing speed limits on the B957 Brechin Road, Kirriemuir and shown on the plan in Appendix 4 to the Report.

8. REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL WASTE SERVICES AND CHARGES

With reference to Article 4 of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 24 January 2023, there was submitted Report No 14/24 by the Director of Infrastructure and Environment presenting proposals for adjusting charges levied by the Council as waste collection authority under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, for the collection and disposal of commercial wastes.

The Director of Infrastructure and Environment introduced the Report and it was noted that the proposed charges reflected the total costs to the council for collection, processing and disposal of waste and recyclables.

The Committee agreed to the application of reviewed charges for 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Report.